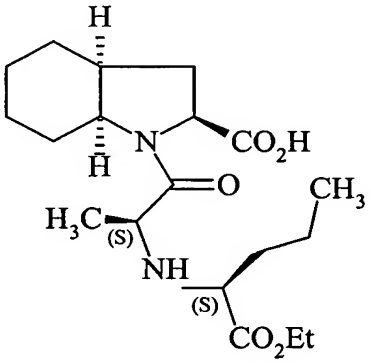
We claim:

14. An α crystalline form of the compound of formula (I):



. $tBuNH_2$ (I),

exhibiting essentially the following powder X-ray diffraction data, measured using a diffractometer (copper anticathode) and expressed in terms of inter-planar distances d, Bragg's angle 2 theta, intensity and relative intensity (expressed as a percentage with respect to the most intense ray) :

Angle 2 theta (°)	Inter-planar distance d (Å)	Intensity	Relative intensity (%)
7.680	11.50	390	8.8
8.144	10.85	230	5.2
9.037	9.78	4410	100
10.947	8.08	182	4.1
13.150	6.73	82	1.9
13.687	6.46	83	1.9
14.627	6.05	582	13.2
15.412	5.74	770	17.5
16.573	5.34	1115	25.3
17.357	5.10	340	7.7
18.109	4.89	193	4.4
19.922	4.45	306	6.9
20.609	4.31	375	8.5
21.412	4.15	226	5.1
21.832	4.07	217	4.9
22.158	4.01	483	11

22.588	3.93	386	8.8
23.323	3.81	107	2.4
24.200	3.67	448	10.2
24.727	3.60	137	3.1
25.957	3.43	125	2.8
26.932	3.31	75	1.7
27.836	3.20	197	4.5
28.966	3.08	129	2.9
29.213	3.05	117	2.7

15. A process for the preparation of the α crystalline form of the compound of claim 14, wherein a solution of perindopril tert-butylamine salt in ethyl acetate is heated at reflux and is then cooled gradually until crystallization is complete.

16. The process of claim 15, wherein the compound of formula (I) obtained by the preparation process described in patent specification EP 0 308 341 is used.

17. The process of claim 15, wherein the concentration of the compound of formula (I) in the ethyl acetate is 70 to 90 g/litre.

18. The process of claim 15, wherein the solution of the compound of formula (I) in ethyl acetate at reflux is first cooled to a temperature of 55 to 65°C at a rate of 5 to 10°C/hour, and then to ambient temperature.

19. The process of claim 15, wherein the solution of the compound of formula (I) in ethyl acetate is seeded during the cooling step at a temperature of 65 to 76°C.

20. The process of claim 18, wherein the solution of the compound of formula (I) in ethyl acetate at reflux is first cooled to a temperature of 55 to 65°C at a rate of 6 to 8°C/hour, and then to ambient temperature.

21. The process of claim 15, wherein the perindopril tert-butylamine salt thereby obtained is in the form of readily filterable individual needles.

22. A method of treating a living animal body afflicted with a condition requiring an inhibitor of angiotensin I converting enzyme, comprising the step of administering to the living animal body an amount of the compound of claim 14 which is effective for alleviation of the condition.

23. A pharmaceutical composition comprising, as active principle, an effective amount of the compound of claim 14, together with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable excipients or vehicles.

24. A method of treating a living animal body afflicted with a cardiovascular disease, comprising the step of administering to the living animal body an amount of the compound of claim 14 which is effective for alleviation of the condition.

25. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 23, which also comprises a diuretic.

26. The pharmaceutical composition of claim 25, wherein the diuretic is indapamide.